

Genkoji Temple: Seated Eleven-Headed Kannon

The principal deity of Genkoji Temple is its Seated Eleven-Headed Kannon. Kannon is the Buddhist avatar who looks upon all the world with mercy and compassion, with a plethora of eyes and ears to find all that needs healing and salvation. This Kannon statue is thought to have been made in the thirteenth century and is one of only a few seated Kannon consecrated Buddhist statues in all of Japan. Made using a joined wooden mosaic technique, the statue is about 74 cm tall and is praised as a particularly beautiful work, with a striking yet graceful androgyny. What stands out in particular about Genkoji Temple's Kannon are its eyes. To make them more realistic, the wood was fitted with crystal coverings. It has been designated as an Important Cultural Property.